

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY
PCT
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference FP18655	FOR FURTHER ACTION	See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416).
International Application No. PCT/AU2003/001496	International Filing Date (day/month/year) 13 November 2003	Priority Date (day/month/year) 2 December 2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC Int. Cl. 7 D06B 7/02, D06M 11/40		
Applicant COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION et al		

<p>1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).</p> <p>These annexes consist of a total of sheet(s).</p>																	
<p>3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">I</td> <td style="width: 90%; padding-left: 5px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basis of the report</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">II</td> <td style="padding-left: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Priority</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">III</td> <td style="padding-left: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">IV</td> <td style="padding-left: 5px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lack of unity of invention</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">V</td> <td style="padding-left: 5px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">VI</td> <td style="padding-left: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Certain documents cited</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">VII</td> <td style="padding-left: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Certain defects in the international application</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">VIII</td> <td style="padding-left: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Certain observations on the international application</td> </tr> </table>		I	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basis of the report	II	<input type="checkbox"/> Priority	III	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability	IV	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lack of unity of invention	V	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement	VI	<input type="checkbox"/> Certain documents cited	VII	<input type="checkbox"/> Certain defects in the international application	VIII	<input type="checkbox"/> Certain observations on the international application
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Date of submission of the demand 28 June 2004	Date of completion of the report 7 December 2004
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized Officer M. BREMERS Telephone No. (02) 6283 2052

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU2003/001496

I. Basis of the report

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report

IV. Lack of unity of invention

1. In response to the invitation to restrict or pay additional fees the applicant has:

- restricted the claims.
- paid additional fees.
- paid additional fees under protest.
- neither restricted nor paid additional fees.

2. This Authority found that the requirement of unity of invention is not complied with and chose, according to Rule 68.1, not to invite the applicant to restrict or pay additional fees.

3. This Authority considers that the requirement of unity of invention in accordance with Rules 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3 is

- complied with.
- not complied with for the following reasons:

The international application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention because it does not relate to one invention or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept. In coming to this conclusion the International Preliminary Examination Authority has found that there are different inventions as follows:

1. Claims 1-36 are directed to a process and apparatus for the mercerisation of unconstrained cellulosic fibres wherein the fibres are held to prevent shrinkage during transport through the mercerising and rinsing zones. It is considered that the prevention of shrinkage of unconstrained fibres during mercerisation comprises a first "special technical feature".
2. Claim 37 is directed to an apparatus for the prevention of shrinkage of fibres during a treatment. It is considered that the conveyor for holding the fibres comprises a second "special technical feature".

These groups are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept, that is, they do not have any common inventive features, which define a contribution over the prior art. The common concept linking together these groups of claims is the prevention of fibre shrinkage during a treatment. However this concept is not novel in the light of the prior art described at page 1 lines 33-36 of the present application and GB 2236770 A (LEUNG SUI KI) 17 April 1991, see the abstract. Therefore these claims lack unity a posteriori.

No search was conducted against claim 37.

4. Consequently, the following parts of the international application were the subject of international preliminary examination in establishing this report:

- all parts.
- the parts relating to claims Nos. 1-36, 38

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V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims 1-36, 38	YES
	Claims	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims 1-36, 38	YES
	Claims	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims 1-36, 38	YES
	Claims	NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

D1: GB 2236770 A (LEUNG SUI KI) 17 April 1991

D2: GB 2125836 A (TOYO BOSEKI) 14 March 1984

D3: JP 08-035164 A (TOSUKO KK) 6 February 1996

D1 discloses the mercerisation of cotton fibres wherein the fibres are compressed to prevent contraction during mercerisation and washing. The mercerisation and washing steps are conducted in the one container. This is not considered to be equivalent to transporting the fibres to separate zones. Therefore, claim 1 involves an inventive step.

D2 and D3 are merely cited as "A" category because either shrinking occurs or it is not clear that it is prevented from occurring.